

II. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for processing used and manufacturing scrap asphalt shingle material into ground cover product, the method comprising the steps of:

[[-]] (a) shredding said asphalt shingle material into asphalt material flakes;

[[-]] (b) mixing a surface treatment material and surfactant with the asphalt material flakes; and

[[-]] (c) heating the mixture comprising the surface treatment material, surfactant and the asphalt material flakes to a temperature sufficient for the surface treatment material to embed into the surface of the flakes.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step[[s]] of[[:]]

~~— in said mixing step, mixing a surfactant with the surface treatment material and the asphalt material flakes; and~~

[[-]] drying the surface treated flakes to produce loose product.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~2~~ in which said surfactant includes a liquid solvent.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step[[s]] of[[:]]

~~— laying the surface treated flakes in a substantially flat position; and~~

[[-]] compressing the surface treated flakes to form a mat.

5. (Currently Amended) A method for processing used and manufacturing scrap asphalt shingle flakes ~~material~~ into ground cover product, the method comprising the steps of:

[[-]] (a) providing:

[[-]] (i) a mixing chamber having an inlet and an outlet;

[[-]] (ii) means for introducing the asphalt flakes into the inlet of the mixing chamber;

[[-]] (iii) surface treatment material; and

[[-]] (iv) at least one of:

[[-]] (1) means for introducing dry surface treatment material into the inlet of said mixing chamber, and

[[-]] (2) means for introducing liquid-borne surface treatment material into said mixing chamber;

[[-]] (b) introducing the asphalt flakes into the inlet of the mixing chamber;

[[-]] (c) introducing one of the dry and the liquid-borne surface treatment material into the mixing chamber;

[[-]] (d) mixing the asphalt flakes and the surface treatment material in the mixing chamber;

[[-]] (e) heating the mixture in the mixing chamber to a temperature sufficient for the surface treatment material to embed into the surface of the asphalt flakes; and

[[-]] (f) discharging the surface treated flakes from the mixing chamber.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising the steps of:

[[-]] (g) providing both of said means for introducing surface treatment material into the mixing chamber; and

[[-]] (h) introducing the other of the dry and the liquid-borne surface treatment material into the mixing chamber.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising the step[[s]] of[[:]]

~~laying the surface treated flakes in a substantially flat position; and~~

[[-]] ~~forming a mat by~~ (g) compressing the surface treated flakes together to form a mat.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 further comprising the steps of:

[[-]] (h) providing a backing material; and

[[-]] (j) attaching the backing material with the compressed flakes.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising the steps of:

[[-]] (g) in said mixing step, mixing a surfactant with the surface treatment material and the asphalt material flakes; and

[[-]] (h) drying the surface treated flakes.

10. (Original) The method of claim 5 in which said mixing chamber comprises a mixing tube provided with auger flighting for carrying the material therethrough.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (New) The method as defined in claim 1 in which the surface treatment material comprises one of a decorative material and a wear resistant material.

13. (New) The method as defined in claim 1 in which the surface treatment material comprises insecticide.

14. (New) The method of claim 2 in which the flakes, surfactant and surface treatment material are mixed in solution in batch processing, the method further comprising removing the surface treated flakes from the solution, and rinsing the surface treated flakes prior to said drying step.

15. The method as defined in claim 2 further comprising conveying the surface treated flakes through an inline dryer to effect said drying step.

16. (New) A method for processing used and manufacturing scrap asphalt shingle material into ground cover product comprising:

- (a) providing asphalt material flakes and a surface treatment material;
- (b) softening the surface of the flakes;
- (c) embedding the surface treatment material into the softened surface of the flakes; and
- (d) one of (i) supplying the surface treated flakes for use as loose ground cover, or (ii) compressing the flakes into a mat product.

17. (New) The method as defined in claim 16 further comprising (e) tumbling the flakes through a tumbler having an inlet for introducing the flakes and an outlet for discharging surface treated flakes, (f) mixing the surface treatment material with asphalt solvent, and (g) spraying the solvent borne surface treatment material onto the flakes for softening the surface of the flakes and embedding the surface treatment material into the surface of the flakes while in the tumbler.

18. (New) The method as defined in claim 16 further comprising (e) mixing the surface treatment material with asphalt solvent, and (f) pressure spraying the solvent borne surface treatment material onto the flakes for softening the surface of the flakes and embedding the surface treatment material into the surface of the flakes.

19. (New) The method as defined in claim 18 in which the flakes are compressed into the mat product prior to pressure spraying of the solvent borne surface treatment material onto the flakes.

20. (New) The method as defined in claim 16 in which the surface treatment material comprises one of powder colorant, granular dust, sand, and small aggregate.

21. (New) The method as defined in claim 16 in which the surface treatment material comprises insecticide.

22. (New) The method as defined in claim 16 further comprising conveying the flakes through pressure rollers for compressing the flakes into the mat product.

23. (New) The method as defined in claim 22 further comprising compressing a mesh scrim into the flakes as they are conveyed through the pressure rollers.

24. (New) The method as defined in claim 16 in further comprising molding the flakes for compressing the flakes into the mat product.